

# **PINAL COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?**

The tool a county uses to determine development needs and sets the goals and objectives that direct future land use development. A Comprehensive Plan is a general and flexible guide for the way a community believes it should develop. The Plan reflects the shared attitudes and values of a community.

### **THREE IMPORTANT FACTORS IN PREPARING A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

- I. Include all the land area subject to the planning or regulatory jurisdiction of the local government preparing the plan.
- II. Include all subject matter related to the physical development of the county.
- III. Include plans for a relatively long period of time - up to twenty plus years.

### **BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

One reason comprehensive planning is so important is that it is carried out by local government, the level of government that directly interacts with citizens most frequently. It is the local government that builds and maintains roads, regulates zoning and land use, and provides police protection.

Most land in this country is privately owned. Although we have a strong tradition of private property rights in this country, we also have long recognized there must be limits to the use of individual pieces of property - locating a foundry, a race track, or a slaughter-house in a residential area, could damage the quality of life of those living there.

The Advisory Committee on Planning and Zoning of the United States Department of Commerce institutionalized Comprehensive Planning in the Standard Zoning Enabling Act (1926) and the Standard City Planning Enabling Act (1928). The zoning act required that zoning be “in accordance with a Comprehensive Plan” and the planning act provided the first formal definition of this type of planning.

As the result of the above acts, since the 1920's, the policy of most states for most land in this country has been to delegate to individual local governments decisions about the regulation of activities on private land, largely through techniques called zoning and subdivision regulations. Local planning is also important to provide a context for decisions of local government about regulating activities on private land.

In addition, the Arizona Legislature has adopted legislation specifying the content of a Comprehensive Plan for Counties which can be found in Chapter §11 of the Arizona Revised Statutes.

“The purpose of the plan is to bring about coordinated physical development in accordance with the present and future needs of the county. The Comprehensive Plan

shall be developed so as to conserve the natural resources of the county, to insure efficient expenditure of public funds, and to promote the health, safety, convenience, and general welfare of the public. “

## **WHY A COUNTY NEEDS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Will a county have a future without planning? Of course. The future will come regardless of whether the county has a Plan. Planning provides a county with the opportunity to make conscious, considered choices about what kind of future it wants to have. The resulting Plan then provides a blueprint for making decisions that affect the future of the county.

## **THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS**

Comprehensive Plans are created and adopted by agencies of local government, but ultimately that government - and the plans it creates - represents and serves individual citizens.

It is difficult to get a group of people to agree even on relatively simple matters. When the issues at stake are as complicated as the future of a county, and when the affected people number in the thousands, achieving agreement or even consensus may seem like an overwhelming challenge. Achieving consensus may be difficult, but it is essential. The laws in the state provide for public participation and public hearings at which citizens have the opportunity to address planning issues.

Planning is a rational way of preparing for the future. It involves the gathering and analysis of data, the examination of possible future trends, the consideration of alternative scenarios, choosing a preferred scenario, and a plan for implementation.

## **CONCLUSION**

The future will come, and local officials will make decisions about it whether or not they plan. Only through Comprehensive Planning, can Pinal County collectively make rational choices, and design its own future to provide sustainable communities within the county.